

AMENDMENT UNDER 37 C.F.R. §1.111
U.S. Appln. No. 10/715,568

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

LISTING OF CLAIMS:

1. (amended) A method of producing maraging steel containing from not less than 0.3 mass% to not more than 2.0 mass% of Ti, which comprises producing a consumable electrode made of the steel for vacuum remelting, and subsequently subjecting the consumable electrode to vacuum remelting, wherein the consumable electrode comprises not less than 5ppm of Mg.

2. (original): A method of producing maraging steel according to claim 1, wherein the consumable electrode is produced by a vacuum induction melting process.

3. (original): A method of producing maraging steel according to claim 2, wherein the vacuum remelting is conducted by a vacuum arc remelting process.

4. (original) A method of producing maraging steel according to claim 3, wherein a maraging steel product obtained by the vacuum remelting is subjected to plastic working to produce a thin strip having a thickness of not more than 0.5 mm.

5. (currently amended): Maraging steel comprising, by mass [percent], at least, from not less than 0.3% to not more than 2.0% Ti, from more than zero to less than 10ppm Mg, less than 10ppm oxygen and less than 15ppm nitrogen, wherein

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the maraging steel contains nitride inclusions having a size of not more than 15 μm in maximum length and oxide inclusions having a size of not more than 20 μm in maximum length, and wherein

the oxide inclusions comprise spinel form inclusions and alumina inclusions in which a content ~~rate~~ of the spinel form inclusions having a size of not less than 10 μm in length ~~to~~ divided by a total content of the spinel form inclusions having a size of not less than 10 μm in length ~~and plus~~ the alumina inclusions having a size of not less than 10 μm in length is more than 0.33.

6. (currently amended): Maraging steel according to claim 5, consisting essentially of, by mass [percent], not more than 0.01% C (carbon), 8.0 to 22.0% Ni, 5.0 to 20.0% Co, 2.0 to 9.0% Mo, from not less than 0.3% to not more than 2.0% Ti, not more than 1.7% Al, from more than zero to less than 10ppm Mg, less than 10ppm oxygen, less than 15ppm nitrogen, and the balance of Fe and incidental impurities.

7. (original): A thin strip which is made from maraging steel as defined in claim 5, and which has a thickness of not more than 0.5 mm.

8. (original): A thin strip which is made from maraging steel as defined in claim 6, and which has a thickness of not more than 0.5 mm.